

Conference *Europeanization of Public Administration and Public Policies: Sharing Values, Norms and Practices*

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The international scientific conference *Europeanization of Public Administration and Public Policies: Sharing Values, Norms and Practices* took place in Dubrovnik from 4th to 7th April 2013. This was the third conference about public administration and policy held in Dubrovnik, following the one in 2008, *Constructing Policy Work in a Changing Governmental Environment*, and the second in 2011, *Developing Policy in Different Cultural Contexts: Learning from Study, Learning from Experience*.

The conference was organized by the IPSA Research Committee 32 Public Policy and Administration, the Institute of Public Administration (the Croatian expert association), Faculty of Law, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb and the Croatian Political Science Association. It was supported by the IPSA Research Committee 5 Comparative Studies on Local Government. The aim of the conference was to present, analyze and discuss interrelatedness of the European integration and public administration reform, policy development and implementation. It gathered a number of well-known experts in public administration and political science from all over the world.

The introductory PhD workshop was divided into two sessions whose moderator was Ana Petek, PhD, senior research assistant at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Zagreb. The discussants were Professor Nina Belayeva (Russian National Research University Higher School of Economics), Professor Emeritus Michael Hill (Brighton University), Professor Peter L. Hupe (Erasmus University of Rotterdam) and Professor John Halligan (ANZSOG Institute for Governance, University of

Canberra). Marko Kovačić (University of Ljubljana) presented his study on the importance of civil society in policy-making and building a model for assessing the impact of civil society in youth policy-making. Aida Liha (Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb) presented her study on policy evaluation in the Croatian EU accession process. Nikola Baketa (Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb) presented his research on the effects of the European higher education initiatives on the national policy-making concentrating on a Croatian case study. Jasmina Džinić (Faculty of Law in Zagreb) presented her research on the impact of quality improvement instruments on organizational learning in administrative organizations. Teo Giljević (Faculty of Law in Zagreb) explained his research on the impact of autonomy of administrative organization at the level of inter-organizational coordination. Anka Kekez-Koštro (Faculty of Political Science in Zagreb) presented her study on implementation of social policy in Croatia in the context of clienteles, governance and administrative reforms.

The main part of the conference began with the opening session *Europeanization of Public Administration and Public Policy*. The moderator was Professor Zdravko Petak (Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb). The first presenter was Professor Robert Hoppe (University of Twente) who approached Europeanization as a political narrative emphasizing that public administration was not only about solving but also about recognizing problems; and that if we find Europeanization as the solution, we should also define its problems. Professor Ivan Koprić (Faculty of Law in Zagreb; president of the Croatian Institute of Public Administration) discussed Europeanization as a remedy for muddled governance in South-Eastern Europe concluding that European standards were among the ways and instruments of healing domestic governance hardships and strengthening genuine domestic forces for overwhelming governance traps. Professor Attila Ágh (Corvinus University, Budapest) presented statistical data on the situation and management index and government-citizens relations in Central European countries noticing that countries went through post-accession crisis encouraged especially by over-concentration and non-internalization of democratic values. Professor Emeritus Fred Lazin made some observations on local government reforms in Russia, Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania after the collapse of the Soviet Union and remarked that though democratization and decentralization were claimed by many central governments as non-negotiable, the analysis of reforms clearly demonstrated how their actual policies were implemented over time and across nations in an often inconsistent manner.

The first session whose moderator was Professor Ivan Koprić was focused on the networked governance in Europe. Nikola Popović (PhD, Croatian Post and Electronic Communication Agency and Railway Market Regulatory Agency) examined the possibility of horizontal approach to network industries in Croatia and concluded that although these network industries display differences among themselves, there are common trans-sector issues that allow a horizontal approach that brings into focus the actual role of different national regulatory and competition authorities and future ways of coordinating their function in multi-sector patterns. Dario Čepo (PhD, Faculty of Law in Zagreb) discussed the problem of democratic deficit in the EU, particularly in decision-making processes, (comitology) and suggested that democratic deficit might be reduced by empowering representatives of national public administrations to work in a transparent manner. Anamarija Musa (Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law in Zagreb) explored the elements of the EU agency governance and highlighted the drivers and the directions of recent reforms of the EU agencies, arguing that although the agencies in the EU have been perceived as diverse, due to numerous agencies in different policies and their various tasks, recent developments inspired by the political and economic reasons show that the construction of common norms and practices for agencies is taking place, aimed at more control and greater accountability of agencies. The discussant of the session was Polonca Kovač, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Administration in Ljubljana.

The second session dealt with recent development trends of local governance both in East and West Europe. The moderator was Professor Emeritus Fred Lazin, while Professor Pawel Swianiewicz (Department of Local Development and Policy, Faculty of Geography and Regional Studies, University of Warsaw) discussed the paper presented by Marta Lackowska from the same Department relating to the character of internationalization activities of the largest Polish cities through examination of urban strategies in the three areas of activities: networks, bilateral arrangements and individual undertakings.

The third session dealt with civil servants and politicians from the European and international perspective. It was moderated by Anamarija Musa and discussed by Professor Stanislava Setnikar Cankar (Faculty of Administration, Ljubljana). Professor John Halligan gave the overview of changing roles and relationships between politicians and civil servants in Anglophone countries giving core argument that an extended period of relative stability in which the permanent component of the relationship prevailed was replaced by one of relative instability (depending on the

country) under the dominance of the political executive and short-term leaders. Professor Zoran Lončar (Faculty of Law, University of Novi Sad) analyzed three types of ministerial responsibility (criminal, civil and political) and tackled practical issues that are essential for successful implementation of the specific regime of ministerial responsibility.

The second day started with the session referring to citizens, administration and the protection of human rights in an enlarged EU. Professor Setnikar Cankar moderated the session while papers were commented and discussed by Anamarija Musa. Iskra A. Miletić, Assistant Professor (Faculty of Security, Skopje) talked about the international standards for ensuring human rights approach in the performance of public services, corporate social responsibility, established by the UN, the EU and the OECD, trying to identify priorities that countries should undertake within their public administration reforms to achieve more effective implementation of the principles of protection of human rights in improving the performance of public services. Slavica Banić (judge of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Croatia) traced changes in the Croatian constitutional judiciary caused by Europeanization and adoption of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and concluded that the interpretative methods nowadays represent an important method of the Constitutional Court. Polonca Kovač (Associate Professor, Faculty of Administration, Ljubljana) traced changes in the constitutional judiciary in Slovenia, mainly focusing on the right to participate in administrative proceedings and the right to be heard from the perspective of being one of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. Ivana Dobrotić (senior research assistant, Faculty of Law, Zagreb, Study Centre for Social Work) tried to show the changes in gender equality policies and practices in Croatia by analyzing social actors and gender-related policies in three different phases concluding that changes in practices and structures were primarily stimulated by economic cycles and institutional developments and secondarily by dominant discourses and implemented policies.

The subsequent session dealt with the implementation of social policy. It was moderated by Professor Emeritus Michael Hill who presented his research on the implementation of social policy relating to payments for social care and defined the actors who impede or contribute to the development of the policy. Professor Kristina Urbanc (Faculty of Law, Zagreb, Study Centre for Social Work) presented the results of a qualitative research on equality and inclusion of students with disabilities at the University of Zagreb, from the perspective of students and teachers, whose

aim was to explore tensions within “guaranteed equal access” and develop more understanding on the opportunities and challenges of involving students with disabilities into the process of higher education. Professor Tony Evans (Royal Holloway of the University of London) analyzed street level policy which has lately been characterized by conduct of political economy in sense that people who design, deliver and consume public services are primarily economically minded individuals and pointed out that the idea of moral economies of practice could offer valuable insights into street-level policy implementation and service delivery. Professor Peter L. Hupe discussed the papers presented in this session.

The third session included papers related to the effects of financial crisis on the public sector. It was moderated by Polonca Kovač. The papers were discussed by Zdravko Petak. Panagiotis Karkatsoulis (National School for Public Administration, Athens) presented research data on reforms undertaken in Greece in the spirit of austerity policy remarking the inadequacy of »one size fits it all« and urgent need for differentiated approaches, which take into account national identity, and specificities of the country. Professor Setnikar Cankar described austerity measures in the public sector in Slovenia and other selected European countries and found similarities in measures relating to employment, salaries and retirement. Dragan Gocevski (PhD, research assistant at Faculty of Law Iustinianus Primus, University of Skopje) in cooperation with Elena Davitovska (PhD, Assistant Professor at the University American College in Skopje) gave theoretical framework for effectiveness in public administration and presented two studies on effectiveness of Macedonian organizations: the Agency for Administration and the State Directorate for Personal Data Protection. At the end of the third session, Irena Bačlija (Faculty of Social Sciences, University in Ljubljana) presented a paper on local government in Slovenia focused on interrelatedness of the degree of local units' capacities and their optimal size (this paper was discussed by Pawel Swianiewicz).

The closing session was opened by the speech of Professor Vesna Pusić, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia, who analyzed the Croatian EU accession efforts. She presented the Croatian situation before signing the accession treaties characterized by post-war recovery, building of democratic institutions, and citizens' delight by the EU to today's state when the whole atmosphere around accession has become ambiguous. She recognized Croatian responsibility for our neighbours and development of this region as Croatia's key role in the EU. Accession to the EU was a long process with multiple purposes in which maturing of administrative and political culture and institutional stability

were crucial for becoming an equal member state and for democratic, social and economic growth.

Presentations that followed were primarily focused on the theory and practice of public administration and policy. Professor Swianiewicz talked about the reforms in Polish local and regional government using top-down approach to Europeanization (absorption, accommodation and transformation) and concluded that thin learning processes were dominant (*absorption level*), but there were also cases of developments going into direction of thick learning. Professor Nenad Zakošek (Dean of the Faculty of Political Science, Zagreb) presented modes in which civil society influences the policy process in Croatia accompanying them by illustrative cases in which civil actors took part and gave proposals for greater involvement of civil actors in Croatian policy-making. Wolfgang Rusch, previous Principal Administrator of the OECD/SIGMA, examined modernization of administrative procedures in South-Eastern European countries analyzing their similarities and principles of good administration they include, especially the quality of administrative action and legal correctness, while avoiding unnecessary complicated, formalistic and lengthy procedures.

The moderators, Professors Hoppe and Koprić, expressed their wish for further conferences to be as fruitful as this one. The abstracts of the papers and other details about the Conference are available on the web page of the Croatian Institute of Public Administration (en.iju.hr).

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